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Megan Ingmire, Communications Director
785.296.8146

KHPA to strengthen Medicaid and HealthWave programs

Director and Deputy Director named to Kansas Medicaid and HealthWave programs

New changes for the Kansas Medicaid and HealthWave programs have been announced to focus on strengthening the programs that serve nearly 283,000 Kansas consumers monthly. A new leadership team will be responsible for strengthening and reforming our Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) to better serve Kansans.

Andrew Allison, Ph.D, has been named the permanent Director of Kansas Medical Assistance (Medicaid and HealthWave) Program, and Christiane Swartz will now serve as Deputy Director for the program, Executive Director Marcia Nielsen, Ph.D, MPH, announced today.

"Kansas Medicaid and HealthWave programs have seen significant challenges in the past year, and as we rise up to meet them, it requires effective leadership," said Nielsen. "Taken together, Andy and Christiane's vast knowledge and experience with Medicaid will prove to be helpful as they address issues, such as the enrollment process, outreach efforts, resource needs and payment reforms, for these vital programs."

Allison, Topeka, is the Deputy Director of the Kansas Health Policy Authority, and has served in that role since December 2005. He has also been the Acting Director of Kansas Medical Assistance Program since October 2006 and has proven himself to be an effective and skillful leader.

Prior to joining the KHPA, Allison spent six years at the Kansas Health Institute as a researcher and Director of Health Care Finance and Organization. From 1992 to 1995, he worked as a budget analyst for the Medicaid program at the Office of Management and Budget in Washington, D.C. He earned a bachelor's degree in history from Ouachita Baptist University, a master's degree in Public Policy from Duke University, and completed his doctorate in economics at Vanderbilt University.

Swartz, Topeka, who currently directs the Medicaid Operations Division, will now also serve as the Deputy Director of the Kansas Medical Assistance Program. Over the past 20 years, Swartz has held various management positions in the public and private sectors. Since 1994, she has served in a number of important leadership positions within SRS and now KHPA, recently managing the Medicaid managed care transition, as well as managing multi-million dollar contracts and directing the implementation of significant federal mandates and new policy initiatives. Swartz earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in Liberal Arts from the Universite d'Aix-en-Provence, France.

Nielsen said, "I am proud of the work that Andy and Christiane have accomplished for Kansas and look forward to their continued leadership for the Kansas Medicaid and SCHIP programs. The legislature and Governor have called on the KHPA to coordinate health and health care for Kansans, and this must include strengthening and reforming our Medicaid program. Andy and Christiane have the experience, talent, skills and compassion required to lead this effort and I am grateful for their service."

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Agency Website: www.khpa.ks.gov
Address: Rm. 900-N, Landon Building, 900 SW Jackson Street, Topeka, KS 66612-1220

Medicaid and HealthWave:
Phone: 785-296-3981
Fax: 785-296-4813

State Employee Health
Benefits and Plan Purchasing:
Phone: 785-296-6280
Fax: 785-368-7180

State Self Insurance Fund:
Phone: 785-296-2364
Fax: 785-296-6995